Army Opens Himalayan Battlefields to Boost Tourism | Jammu & Kashmir | 12 Sep 2024

Why in News?

Recently, in a move to enhance border tourism and match China's infrastructure **efforts along the** Line of Actual Control (LAC), the Indian Army has opened up **historic battlefield** locations in the Himalayas **for tourists.**

Key Points

- **Tourism Infrastructure Development:**
  - India has identified **100 additional villages** along the **LAC** to create infrastructure for tourism as part of a **multi-pronged approach** to counter China's efforts in the region.
  - The Army is opening up Himalayan locations where key battles, such as the Kargil conflict,1999 took place.
    - Tourists are now allowed to visit Tiger Hill, a critical site during the Kargil war.
- **Border Security and Deterrence:**
  - According to the Army, opening these inaccessible areas and developing infrastructure in border regions will act as a deterrent to claims on undemarcated borders with China.
  - A **pilot project** for tourism is being set up in **Zemithang,** the **last Indian village near the LAC in Arunachal Pradesh.** This is the route through which the 14th Dalai Lama entered India in 1959.

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- **Line of Actual Control:** It is divided into three sectors.
  - The eastern sector which spans **Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim** (1346 km).

- The middle sector in **Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh** (545 km).
    - The western sector in **Ladakh** (1597 km).
    - The alignment of the **LAC in the eastern sector i**s along the [McMahon Line of 1914.](#)
  - **Case of Arunachal Pradesh:** India's claim line is different from that of the LAC. It is the line seen in the official boundary marked on the maps as released by the **Survey of India**, including [Aksai Chin (occupied by China)](#). The state of Arunachal Pradesh is an 'integral and inalienable' part of India.
    - In China's case, LAC corresponds mostly to its claim line, but in the eastern sector, it claims the entire Arunachal Pradesh as South Tibet.
  - **China's Intention**: There have been reports of **Chinese construction of villages** in Arunachal Pradesh, 5 kilometres from the [Bum La pass](#).
    - The construction of the village has been seen by analysts as a move to bolster China's claim to the area, and part of a broader recent push by China to build civilian settlements in disputed frontier areas, which [it has also done with Bhutan](#).

Purple Revolution | Jammu & Kashmir | 12 Sep 2024

Why in News?

The [Lavender cultivation](#) success in Jammu and Kashmir exemplifies the powerful collaboration between research institutions, industry, and [youth entrepreneurship,](#) offering a path to [boost farmers' income](#) and enhance the [rural economy.](#)

Key Points

- **Aroma Mission and Lavender Cultivation:**
    - [Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)](#) launched the [Jammu and Kashmir Aroma Arogya Gram (JAAG)](#) project to promote alternative crops like [medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs).](#)
    - The [Aroma Mission](#) **introduced** lavender cultivation **to boost farmers' income** and create employment.
    - Farmers received **free planting material, training, and support in cultivation, processing, and marketing.**
        - Originating in **Bhaderwah, Doda, lavender cultivation** has spread to other J&K districts and states like **Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, and Nagaland.**
- **Economic Impact:**
    - Over 1,300 hectares in J&K are under lavender cultivation, with significant **progress in districts like Udhampur, Poonch, and Rajouri.**
    - Lavender farms have gained national recognition and **boosted tourism,** as seen in the [Republic Day tableau at Kartavya Path.](#)
    - In 2024, **Doda district extracted 100 kg of lavender oil** and harvested 10 quintals of dry flowers, generating significant revenue for farmers.
- **Agricultural Challenges in J&K:**
    - Agriculture employs **65% of the population** and contributes **27% to J&K's** economy.
    - The region faced challenges like **difficult terrain, monkey menace, and poor accessibility, limiting land utilization for traditional crops** (rice, maize, wheat, pulses).
- **Future Prospects:**
    - Lavender farming opens opportunities in **value-added medicinal and cosmetic** products.
    - The initiative is a [model for rural entrepreneurship,](#) fostering growth in India's path to

becoming a developed nation.

Purple Revolution

- Purple revolution is also known as **Lavender Revolution** and aims to promote the **indigenous aromatic crop-based** agro-economy by shifting from foreign aromatics to homegrown kinds.
- First-time producers were offered free lavender seedlings as part of the goal, and those who had previously produced lavender were paid Rs. 5-6 per plant.
- The CSIR-Aroma Indian Institute of Integrative Medicine **(IIIM)'s** Initiative has begun lavender cultivation in the **Ramban district of Jammu and Kashmir.**
- Lavender farming is done in nearly all of **Jammu and Kashmir's 20 districts.**
    - Particularly, the districts of Kathua, Udhampur, Doda, Kishtwar, Rajouri, Srinagar, Bandipora, Budgam, Ganderbal, Anantnag, Kulgam, Baramulla etc. have made huge progress in this direction.
- **Lavender Cultivation:**
    - Native to Europe, lavender was introduced in the temperate regions of Jammu & Kashmir by the **CSIR Aroma Mission.**
    - It is a small, perennial aromatic herb shrub used in fragrance, specialty food, and alternative medicine industries.
    - **Propagation Methods:**
        - Seeds
        - Rooted cuttings
        - Tissue culture
        - Layering
    - **Soil:**
        - Grows well in light, well-aerated soil rich in organic matter.
        - Thrives in neutral to alkaline soil that is free-draining.
        - Sensitive to waterlogging but can grow in poor or eroded soil.
    - **Rainfall:**
        - Performs well with an annual rainfall range between 300 to 1400 mm.
    - **Climate:**
        - A hardy temperate plant, tolerant to drought and frost.
        - Prefers cool winters and cool summers with ample sunlight.
        - Can be cultivated in areas with snowfall and hilly terrain.
    - **Applications:**
        - Food and flavouring
        - Pharmaceutical and therapeutic uses
        - Cosmetic products
        - Industrial purposes